

CITY OF HELENA GROWTH POLICY UPDATE
Combined Responses from June 2008 and March 2009 Surveys

79 responses	Adequate	Inadequate	Not Important	Undecided
Cultural				
Historic preservation	40.5	29.5	1	1
Museums 1 comment	43.5	28.5	1	2
Public art	35.5	35.5	1	3
<i>Other Cultural Concerns You Have (please identify):</i> 20 comments		5 comments		
Economy				
Overall area economy and employment opportunities 5 comments	39	29		3
Type and location of businesses 4 comments	21	42		6
<i>Other Economic Concerns You Have (please identify):</i> 20 comments				2
Neighborhoods and Housing				
Appearance 3 comments	51	18	1	1
Housing (affordable, quality, availability) 7 comments	17	48		8
Mixture of uses in close proximity (offices, services, stores and housing types) 11 comments	28	40	1	3
Walkable (block length, sidewalks, safety) 4 comments	15.5	51.5	1	1
<i>Other Neighborhood or Housing Concerns You Have (please identify):</i> 26 comments		2 comments		
Parks and Open Space				
Amount of parks/open space 5 comments	33	27		2
Quality of the parks 4 comments	44.5	24.5		3
<i>Other Parks or Open Space Concerns You Have (please identify):</i> 30 comments		3 comments		
Transportation				
City-wide bus opportunities 4 comments	5	57	2	6
Efficiency – your ability to get around Helena 9 comments	23	43		5
Facilities for walking and bicycling 1 comment	6	61	1	
Maintenance of street network	46.5	18.5		
<i>Other Transportation Concerns You Have (please identify):</i> 34 comments		2 comments		
Other Issues				
Air quality 8 comments	52	12		2
Landscaping requirements for businesses 8 comments	26	38	1	5
Local government services (police, fire, garbage pick up, street maintenance, etc.) 10 comments	61	7		2
Protection of area natural resources (stream corridors, wetlands, forests) 16 comments	28	35	1	2
Other Concerns You Have: 19 comments		4 comments		

COMMENTS:

Cultural	
Historic preservation	Support and build on what we have
Museums	More!
Public art	<p>Doing fine in this; Large music venues; Use public art more effectively as an element in the pedestrian circulation system “walkable sightlines”; Signage, connectivity by car, bike and walking to our art, museums; Locations of cultural areas and buildings [all cultural items checked as inadequate]; Need greater collaboration among arts and cultural institutions; Educational institutions – support schools and attract other education opportunities; Public performance spaces [checked inadequate]; I want a lot more public art exposure in the city; Develop Montana Historical Museum facility = Cody’s Buffalo Bill Museum – make it world class for research, training, education ala Museum of the Rockies; public art – see Paris or Europe generally; Alternative (?) culture, indigenous cultures; I would like to see more cultural assets but how would they be paid for? tax breaks/ incentives?; Viable downtown; Preserve the historical landmarks and building – continue to expand the museums; Needs to be ↑ public support of the arts – of all types – permanent mill;</p> <p>But some <u>better</u> public art – fewer murals; These are good now but improvement is possible; Currently there is adequate cultural aesthetics but I would like to see preservation into the future; We need to preserve historic buildings and neighborhoods;</p>
<i>Other Cultural Concerns You Have (please identify):</i>	Public art is adequate - but would like to see more, better designed spaces to enjoy the art; Performing art space between Civic [Center] and Myrna Loy;
Economy	
Overall area economy and employment opportunities	Generally ok; More manufacturing? ↑ Wages [checked inadequate]; Diversify [checked inadequate]; Adequate but needs improvement;
Type and location of businesses	Want to avoid the doughnut effect – Keep businesses in town; Support multi-use, incentivize local businesses; Box store sprawl out-competes local business; Too many box stores;
<i>Other Economic Concerns You Have (please identify):</i>	<p>Need to encourage diversity in business (employers); More types of businesses should be located where they can be reached on foot; We need to require that new buildings address landscaping, buildings that look less like boxes and have better design. Require energy saving ideas.;</p> <p>Obviously minimum wage need to increase; Need a diverse economy with salaries that will allow young people to live here; Need more well-paying jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities; Design requirements for big box stores - incentivize local businesses; Too many part time minimum wage; too many casinos; I like the idea of clustering essential business (i.e., grocery and hardware) near residential areas; State government – in a consistent employer – but diversity is key to sustainability. Housing costs are creeping up and state workers have tough time finding affordable places to buy; Businesses integrated into neighborhoods for</p>

	<p>walking/short distances; Wages need to be livable [checked inadequate]; Too much fringe development, should discourage new population growth; Sprawl; Prepare to humker down and do with less; City needs to plan for adequate commercial corridors so that large commercial buildings can be built if the State or private businesses need; Viable downtown; Diversification – light manufacturing; Wages are not covering cost of living and housing; Helena ranks high on micropolises but we need better paying jobs to pay for increased housing costs; Available infill opportunity limited; Economic/tax incentives should be given to downtown businesses to form a lasting, vibrant downtown. Retail/commercial only should be on the ground floors, with offices above. Incentives for longer hours.; Too many casinos.</p> <p>Vitality of downtown businesses; Too many work to jobs; Too many casinos; Downtown walking corridor; More private sector opportunities; No more chain stores; Concerned about the migration of businesses to the north side of town – keep a balance of businesses in the central and downtown areas; You should promote community gardens [and] have more corner grocery stores; Sense loss of downtown – would like more focus on downtown;</p>
Neighborhoods and Housing	
Appearance	<p>Why are all new houses gray or beige? Most places [checked adequate]; trash and wind-blown garbage; Varies – some beautiful, some <u>not</u> [checked inadequate]; Needs improvement [checked inadequate];</p>
Housing (affordable, quality, availability)	<p>How will my kids afford health care <u>and</u> housing?; More attractive, affordable housing [checked adequate]; affordable [checked inadequate]; Need more infill and energy efficient homes [checked inadequate]; over priced [checked inadequate]; Need more choice [checked inadequate]; Not for young families – OUR FUTURE [checked inadequate];</p>
Mixture of uses in close proximity (offices, services, stores and housing types)	<p>Good but could be better; Good in older parts of town – bad in new subdivisions; Pretty adequate but let's be proactive about it [checked adequate]; affordable [checked inadequate]; Would like to see more; More mixed uses in neighborhoods [checked inadequate]; More “village” approach [checked inadequate]; All of above and more – need walkable communities and neighborhoods; Historic areas should not be challenged! Depending on area [checked adequate]; Because the city does not maintain the sidewalks, many are in disrepair or non-existent. A comprehensive ped/bike trail/sidewalk system should be important for the future.</p> <p>Something seems to be starting to kill downtown – it might be Great Northern;</p>

Walkable (block length, sidewalks, safety)	Need more sidewalks in new subdivisions; Priority – consider main connecting routs for bike/walking paths; many neighborhoods lack sidewalks; Only downtown, old neighborhoods [checked inadequate]; Bad sidewalks; Lack of continuous sidewalks;
<i>Other Neighborhood or Housing Concerns You Have (please identify):</i>	Need more sidewalks especially near schools; Too much ground in closely-built residential areas is given over for off-street parking. This is a negative aspect of infill; This is ok in core city neighborhoods. Hard to understand why my 50-year old neighbor doesn't have sidewalks. Like the alleys to keep the cars in the back. Should require porches; Because the city does not maintain the sidewalks, many are in disrepair or non-existent. A comprehensive ped/bike trail/sidewalk system should be important for the future.; shopping to same store across the street from each other type; Support infilling and building <u>up</u> not out; Would like to see more streetlights for safety when walking at night. Would like Helena to do what Missoula has done with affordable housing (keep houses in a trust); Lacking sidewalks is pathetic – especially in neighborhoods where people from out of town frequent (i.e., Vigilante Stadium); More neighborhood stores (grocery) [checked inadequate]; Need mixed use neighborhoods [checked inadequate]; Appearance – new = boring and unimaginative – see Reston VA, Denver CO. Affordability – too many realtors, greedy developers; Assisting with infrastructure could assist with affordable housing. The city needs to help guide growth by extending water and sewer service or at least provide assistance, otherwise the developer chooses where the city grows and not the city residents; Parks plan should be updated an current needs of community assessed; Need alleys in new subdivisions; Preserve historic areas/speeding [checked inadequate]; Do not (?) to (?) what other major cities are investing in redeveloping;. Do not put multifamily housing in historic single family areas – major cities are investing large sums restoring (?) their areas to what Helena has so far maintained; More groups like Rodney St. Association to facility community; Uniformity, weeds, litter, vandalism; Too much development outside town where there is plenty of infilling that could be done; Sidewalks (west side); Housing for young couples; Need sidewalks on upper California; Dogs unleashed, cats – overrun with these; We need better pedestrian access; Housing is very pricey for non-professional couples and even some professional singles; please clean up some junky areas NW of Walmart under I-15; It would be nice to have more community garden opportunities;
Parks and Open Space	
Amount of parks/open space	Need to keep pace as community grows; Plan for continued open space and green belts; Especially in east, west, north [checked inadequate]; If we maintain all we have plus need more conservation areas in Valley[checked adequate]; We have great open space and more would be better and continue to be valuable to desirability to live here;

Quality of the parks	<p>Need to keep pace as community grows; Mixed but we have great parks [wrote mixed under adequate] ; But have been major improvements [checked inadequate]; Need more links [checked inadequate];</p> <p>Less grass and more xeriscape flower gardens – cut down on weedkiller and fertilizer applications, mowing;</p>
<i>Other Parks or Open Space Concerns You Have (please identify):</i>	<p>Ability to maintain what we already have; Excellent!; Beautiful areas which should be part of the open space system are still in danger of development (Mount Ascension ridge, etc.); Connectivity, bikeable, walkable; Trail connectors. Love the South Hills Trail. Map and new signage.; Helena does well in this area – parks better than open spaces; Need to support open space with tax dollars; Need to link parks with walkability; Maintain agricultural lands as open space; Weeds hurt the open space and City reputation. I'd love to see more open space! (I would support it (\$)); There are old wading pool parks that should be developed (South Central). Sugarloaf would be great open space; ↑# of conservation for agricultural land; In the older neighborhoods [checked inadequate]; Need to have open space buffers against development on north, east and west; Reduce focus on “organized” park development. Few soccer fields, more open space. Less grass, more native vegetation; More open space. <u>Weeds</u>; Emphasis should be placed on obtaining riparian corridors; Upkeep in parks, community garden in parks [checked inadequate for both items]; Have parks partner with library and built “out posts” – especially for youth and young families – community center; Weed control, maintenance; Need to better care for existing and acquire/plan for more; The city is doing a good job slowly replacing playground equipment, but many parks still have old metal and unsafe equipment that should be replaced.; Not enough tennis courts at 1 location;</p> <p>Too much emphasis already; Concerns about management, maintenance, commitment; Library-facilitated gatherings at local parks for young mothers and children; Need trails and community gardens; Would be nice to have more community garden opportunities; More community gardens!;</p>
Transportation	
City-wide bus opportunities	<p>Time limits too much; relying on HATS is not enough!;</p> <p>Seems ok but hardly anyone rides it;</p>
Efficiency – your ability to get around Helena	<p>It varies; Car – adequate, bike/car (?) – inadequate; In a car – fine, other modes more difficult (RR crossings a problem but still prioritize bike/walk opportunities); Traffic increasing; “Old” area travel is adequate – North Montana commercial area is awful; Improve sidewalks [checked inadequate]; RR tracks – east/west arterials [checked inadequate];</p> <p>Marginal; Much better since traffic light synchronization;</p>
Facilities for walking and bicycling	<p>Biking paths [checked inadequate];</p> <p>Some areas are difficult to bike, walk;</p>

Maintenance of street network	Highway shoulders [checked inadequate]; Not as good as it was under Dick Nisbet [checked adequate]; All city streets should be paved [checked inadequate];
<i>Other Transportation Concerns You Have (please identify):</i>	<p>At grade RR crossings need to be improved; Want buses on major arteries; We need a truly thoughtful study of walkability, covering all aspects of what it is and how it works; Greenbelt—ways along water ways; We need to foresee and plan for avoiding bottlenecks; Need bike trails to Spring Meadow Lake; Want buses - more hours of the day and Saturdays. Bus and Ride opportunities? Buses have to also go near where people live!; Need more planning for the future; Not a crisis but need to catch up with growth and anticipate future needs; Accessibility, safety for all travelers – cars, buses, pedestrians, bikers, disabled; Handicap and time accessible; Need more mass transit systems; We need Park-n- Ride/Park-n-Share! HATS is good start, but we need better services; Need wider shoulders on all main roads and bridges – make it easier to bike and walk, make it a cost of development; City should ramp up, way, up , incentives and facilities for biking, walking, car pools, and buses; Snow removal on sidewalks; Speed limits reduced on major streets (?) [checked inadequate]; Sidewalks and street trees between the street and sidewalk!; Better bicycling; We need to better connect the Great Northern area with the rest of downtown in terms of pedestrians; We really need a better bus system; Pretty important area of attention – as is Helena is <u>not</u> pedestrian or bicycle friendly. Implement transportation plan with these as priority – maintain/sweep streets and walks; A city-wide bus system may be underutilized if instituted, unless it is really widespread. Improving traffic flow and traffic light efficiency may be better use of funds, as well as a comprehensive ped/bike network, including bike lanes on the streets, which only require striping/signing maintenance.</p> <p>No way to <u>drive</u> from point A to point B; It would be beneficial to make it safer for kids to get around on bikes; More bike paths; More bike routes needed; People [not] paying attention while driving to pedestrians/bicyclists; These are being addressed and it takes time; More bike routes; Better bicycle corridors; We need <u>much</u> better bike/pedestrian access; I would cycle or walk to work but am too afraid of the Capitol interchange – no room to safely water or ride across. It’s ridiculous that this main point of crossing has no bike/ped facilities; Needs: buses, bike lanes, “share the road” signs, plow snow more frequently, clean off gravel on the sides of the roads for cyclists; Would like more focus on “walkable” “bikeable routes to shopping, groceries, etc;</p>
Other Issues	
Air quality	<p>Probably need more constraints in winter; Not good in summers with fires; When we have fires [checked inadequate]; as population ↑ need to consider pollution ↑ from ↑ autos; within the bounds of controllable [checked adequate]; Please – need emission requirements [checked inadequate]; Except when there are fires [checked adequate]; Depends on season [checked inadequate];</p> <p>Mostly good;</p>

Landscaping requirements for businesses	Though usually a perfunctory thing; site by site business landscaping should be coordinated to enhance walkability; Pathetic! Does it exist?? Leave native vegetation and encourage its use over ↑ water plants; Could be better; Landscaping should not be exempt if you are a business; Enforce!! Add more to existing [checked adequate]; Study Cary (?) NC;
Local government services (police, fire, garbage pick up, street maintenance, etc.)	City service is good; More recycling!; But charge more for fire protection of those building in the woods; Except streets in some areas [checked inadequate]; Except street maintenance[checked inadequate]; Litter problem; Excellent service; More recycling opportunities; Would like recyclables pickup;
Protection of area natural resources (stream corridors, wetlands, forests)	Areas of runoff from town being developed with no alternate plans; Improving; More support for water quality district; Except streams – prevent over appropriation – do not let 10 Mile and others go dry from irrigation/diversion; establish and enforce development setbacks; Intermittent [checked border between adequate and inadequate]; Deal with tree infestations in our parks and viewscape; e.g. Parriman development on west side [checked inadequate];; We need to always improve on these; But more can be done; Would like more wetlands, stream, water protected;
Other Concerns You Have:	Need to grow where we can provide services easily. Water sewer support developing, encouraging commercial nodes vs. strips; Traffic noise level, truck route around Helena; More parking lot and boulevard landscaping. Services are good but being stretched by annexation. Flexibility needed for downtown parking. Don't forget to maintain the planters on the 300/400 block of the Gulch.; Need to introduce <u>sustainability</u> in planning; Health Impact Assessment (HIA); public health concerns: air/water quality/walkability/bikability/community safety need to be taken into consideration; police and fire not grown with city growth; important to minimize sprawl; Don't feel the city needs to keep packing people into tighter and tighter spaces. We don't need to be like big metro areas – a lot of us moved here to get away from such high density – sence of space is important. Need to limit square footage of homes unless there's a requirement to build green – especially with heat, electricity, and water management; Building in the WUI; Floodplain development must be decreased and/or omitted. Maintain existing riparian and promote restoration of removed areas; Downtown “garden” areas are poorly maintained! Once you plant along the sidewalk, it must be well planned, and the maintenance must be supervised by a gardener. (Adopt a corner by Gulch businesses?); Allowing development in stream and wildlife corridors is bad – don't do it; Adequate public health services for aging population; Architectural code for big box stores and large commercial buildings; Law enforcement/fire protection [checked inadequate]; Deer population control, recycling facilities (?) [checked inadequate for both items]; Businesses need to do better upkeep of landscape; Get behind the new brand Learning Center for the Arts. Inform churches about growth and city issues so they can pray. Facilitate neighborliness more than a policy culture. Make this community friendly to young couples and to retirees. Better signage – with Roger Brooks; The city should require the big box structures and new developments

	<p>(strip malls) to meet higher architectural requirements (like Bozeman) rather than just landscaping requirements. Better looking structures has a greater and long lasting impact to beautifying the development.;</p> <p>Minimize sprawl;</p> <p>Diesel smoke from trains that idle in my neighborhood; Plastics recycling/curbside pickup of recyclables; No more subdivisions on Mt. Helena; Encourage residents to conserve water by turning turf to other uses. Grass is a resource consumer of the worst kind. The state could set an example by taking out the golf course underneath the Capitol interchange; I want curbside recycling;</p>
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Budget Item	Average Percentage from 69 Respondents (total is sum of percentages respondent gave for each item)
Affordable housing	12.225% (with total of 769)
Code enforcement (zoning, building codes, etc.)	4.27% (with total of 251.5)
Cultural – public art, historic preservation	6.525% (with total of 386)
Emergency services (police and fire protection)	11.85% (with total of 612.5)
Energy and water conservation	10.61% (with total of 581.5)
Infrastructure repair and maintenance (water, sewer, stormwater drainage, streets)	10.885% (with total of 574)
Maintaining/expanding parks, playgournds, open space	11.185% (with total of 589)
Mass transit/park and ride	10.915% (with total of 661)
Non-motorized facilities (sidewalks, trails, bike/pedestrian paths, etc.)	15.235% (with total of 814)
Solid waste and recycling	10.385% (with total of 539)
Street repair and maintenance	7.595% (with total of 393)
<i>Other (please describe)</i> Community gardens Control building in the WUI Improve traffic flow Health Dept. – prevention Public health which includes services for aging population, air quality and water quality	20% 10% 75% 10% 20%
<p>The City should undertake a thorough and <u>thoughtful</u> study of <u>walkability</u>. What is it? How does it work? One of Helena’s greatest urban assets now is its walkability. We should protect it, learn from it, enhance it, promote it, make it our “brand.” Such things as business landscaping, park planning, and placement of public art should all be coordinated in service of overall walkabilityEmergency services (police and fire protection) through impact fees; Sidewalks most important; property owners need help to complete the network; what</p>	

about impact fees?; Budget percentages pretty equally shared; Street repair and maintenance – shoulders; Housing – market – break the pirates (?); Affordable housing – for young families. Energy and water conservation, Solid waste and recycling – ask other agencies to take care of this.

Because the existing infrastructure is in place but still needs to be maintained, I think the greatest percentages should be spent to develop new systems, including a comprehensive bike/ped network, expanding parks (new equipment), and energy conservation.; Should have city –supplied wifi collected through property taxes – be coming essential;

I think this is a very poor and confusing survey. The people at the table were clueless and it seems like you’ll get too diverse of info due to vague question.

Too many options to reply sensibly. Of course we need water, sewer, police, etc. So how much is left for the other items, and where does the revenue come from? I don’t know what you are learning from this exercise other than people have a big wish list.

Some respondents commented they did not know if the budget percentages represented additional moneys that were available.

City resident?

Yes - 55

No - 12

Age: 1 Less than 11 21-40 years old 41 41-60 years old 16 More than
20 years old 60 years old

15 survey respondents did not fill out the back side of the survey form.